

COMPLETE LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A communication method between a collecting unit (5) and a plurality of control devices (7i), each of which is associated with at least an electrical device (1i), via a communication channel,

wherein messages are exchanged between said collecting unit (5) and said control devices (7i), each of ~~which~~ said messages contain[[s]]ing at least:

a progressive message number (Pr_N);

an addressee identification number (ID_addressee);

a portion of informative content and/or executable commands (M4);

wherein a specific identification number (ID_i; Ser_Ni), is assigned to each control device, said messages being addressable selectively to a specific control device via said addressee identification number;

~~and~~ wherein when a control device (7i) receives a message containing an addressee identification number (ID_addressee) differing from its own identification number (ID_i; Ser_Ni), after a given delay interval said control device generates and transmits on said channel (3) at least one echo of said message, unless a reply to said message was received from the control device[[,]] to which said message was addressed, ~~was received~~, and

~~a routine being activated wherein said control device compares said message with pre-established criteria and transmits said echo of said message~~

upon determining that said message corresponds to said criteria, to prevent unlimited generations of echoes of a given message.

2. (Previously Presented) Method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the control device (7i) that generated an echo of the message received and addressed to a different control device, temporarily stores identifying information of said message and does not generate subsequent echoes of said message while the identifying information remains stored.

3. (Previously Presented) Method as claimed in claim 2, wherein each control device stores the identifying information of messages of which it has generated an echo in a temporary list containing identifying information of a predetermined maximum number of messages.

4-32. (Canceled).

33. (Currently Amended) A system comprising a collecting unit (5) including at least a processor (15), a memory (17) and a transmission and reception device (13), and a plurality of control devices (7₁), each of which comprises at least a processor (9), a memory (11) and a transmission and reception device (12) and is interfaced with at least an electrical device (1₁)

said collecting unit (5) and said control devices (7_i) being connected to one another via a communication channel,

wherein the collecting unit (5) and the control devices (7_i) are programmed to exchange messages between said collecting unit and said control devices, each of which contains at least:

a progressive message number (Pr_N);

an addressee identification number (ID_addressee);

a portion of information content and/or executable commands
(M4);

wherein each control device is assigned its own identification number (ID_I; Ser_Ni), said messages being addressable selectively to a specific control device via said addressee identification number; and

wherein when a control device (7_i) receives a message containing an addressee identification number (ID_addressee) differing from its own identification (ID_addressee; Ser_Ni), after a given delay interval said control device generates and transmits on said channel (3) at least one echo of said message, unless a reply to said message has already been received from the control device[[,]] to which said message was addressed, ~~has already been received, and~~

wherein said control device compares said message with pre-established criteria and transmits said echo of said message upon determining that said

~~message corresponds to said criteria, a routine being activated to prevent unlimited generations of echoes of a given message.~~

34. (Previously Presented) System as claimed in claim 33, wherein the control device (7i) that generated an echo of the message received and addressed to a different control device is programmed to temporarily store identifying information of said message and does not generate subsequent echoes of said message while the identifying information remains stored.

35. (Previously Presented) System as claimed in claim 34, wherein each control device comprises a memory, and is programmed to store the identifying information of messages it has generated an echo of in a temporary list containing identifying information of a predetermined maximum number of messages.

36-63. (Canceled)

64. (Currently Amended) A control device (7i) for electrical devices (1i) comprising at least a processor (9), a memory (11), a connection to a corresponding electrical device (1i), and a device for transmission and reception (12) on a communication channel for the reception and the transmission of information and/or commands to which an identification number (ID_i) is assigned,

said control device being programmed to receive and transmit messages via said communication channel, each of which contains at least:

a progressive message number (Pr_N);

an addressee identification number (ID_addressee);

a portion of informative content and/or executable commands (M4);

and is programmed so that when it receives a message containing an addressee identification number (ID_addressee) differing from its own identification number (ID_i), from said channel via its own transmission and reception device (12), it transmits at least an echo of the message received on said channel (3) after a given delay interval, unless it receives on said channel a reply to said message, said delay interval specific to said control device so as to prevent overlapping of messages on said communication channel, and

said control device programmed to compare said message with pre-established criteria and transmit said echo of said message upon determining that said message corresponds to said criteria, a routine being provided to prevent unlimited generations of echoes of a given message.

65. (Previously Presented) Control device as claimed in claim 64, programmed to temporarily store identifying information of each message of which it generates an echo and not to generate subsequent echoes of said message while the identifying information remains stored.

66. (Previously Presented) Control device as claimed in claim 65, programmed to store the identifying information of messages of which it generated an echo in a temporary list of identifying information relative to a maximum number of said messages.

67-84. (Canceled)

85. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 1, each of said messages further containing a counter, and

wherein a control device receiving a message containing an addressee identification number differing from its own identification number compares a value associated with said counter to a pre-established value and transmits said message when said value is above said pre-established value.

86. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 85, wherein said control device receiving a message containing an addressee identification number differing from its own identification number decreases said value of said counter prior to transmitting said echo of said message.

87. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 86, wherein an initial value of said counter is equal to a total number of said plurality of control devices.

88. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 1, wherein each control device transmits said echo of the message received with its own specific delay.

89. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 88, wherein the delay with which each control device transmits the echo of the message received is determined as a function of the identification number assigned to said control device.

90. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 89, wherein said delay is equal to the duration of the message multiplied by the identification number of the respective control device that transmits the echo.

91. (Newly Added) Method as claimed in claim 90, wherein said collector unit emits messages addressed to specific control devices with a temporal interval above a maximum delay with which a previous message can be regenerated via echo by all of said plurality of control devices.

92. (Newly Added) System as claimed in claim 33, wherein each of said messages further contains a counter, and

wherein each control device is programmed upon receiving a message containing an addressee identification number differing from its own identification to

compare a value associated with said counter to a pre-established value,

decrease said value of said counter when said counter value is above said pre-established value and subsequently transmit said message.

93. (Newly Added) System as claimed in claim 33, wherein each of said plurality of control devices is programmed to transmit said echo of the message received with its own specific delay determined as a function of the identification number assigned to said control device, and

wherein said collector unit is programmed to emit messages addressed to specific control devices with a temporal interval above a maximum delay with which a previous message can be regenerated via echo by all of said plurality of control devices.

94. (Newly Added) Control device as claimed in claim 64, each of said messages further containing a counter, and

wherein said control device is programmed upon receiving a message containing an addressee identification number differing from its own identification to

compare a value associated with said counter to a pre-established value,

decrease said value of said counter when said counter value is above said pre-established value and

subsequently transmit said message.

95. (Newly Added) Control device as claimed in claim 64, wherein said control device is programmed to transmit said echo of the message received with its own specific delay determined by multiplying said identification number associated with said control device by a duration of the message.